

organizationally with the political parties, although in some cases they bore the same names and occasionally there existed an overlapping of leadership. No political party could claim to represent a real mass movement. All of them, even those that could boast of membership of prominent government or Majlis leaders, were ephemeral in character and were apt to disappear from the political scene of the nation without leaving any traces whatever. Their programs, with the possible exception of that of the Socialist party, did not contain anything to permit political and ideological differentiation among them. Nevertheless they could not be ignored. While it is true that separately none of them exercised important political influence, yet, combined, they represented a significant political awakening. Their very existence meant that more educated Iranians were tired of dictatorship and were anxious to see democracy flourish. Although the acquaintance of the average Iranian with democratic procedures was superficial and often indicated an eager expectation of full civic rights without the corresponding responsibilities, yet these parties were dedicated to liberalism and social justice. This statement does not mean that the parties were completely disinterested. On the contrary, many of their members experienced a feeling of personal frustration due to the methods of the antiquated and conservative regime that did not offer too many opportunities to young talents. But these younger men were ready to identify the general liberalization of the regime with their own success.

It is important to note in this connection that all of these parties were essentially nationalistic and, with a few exceptions, hostile to

any form of foreign interference. It was public opinion as shaped by these groups that dictated the tenor of editorials in the press of Teheran. The fact that in many cases members of the parties were recruited among the civil servants meant that important sections of the Iranian bureaucracy were dissatisfied with existing conditions. On the other hand, certain cliques were being formed among government officials to promote their own interests. The Adalat party had a particularly large representation of officials in its ranks. In the case of the American Financial Mission government employees played the role of a pressure group. A political party was a good platform on which one could ventilate one's grievances. The parties also